SATURDAY EVENING POST JAN 4 1964 — JAN 11 1964

McCarthy, Eugene

SPEAKING OUT* *The voice of dissent*

THE CIA IS GETTING OUT OF HAND

By Sen. Eugene McCarthy

A senator charges that the Central Intelligence Agency, a law unto itself, meddles in the framing of U.S. foreign policy.

Wrapped in its cloak of secrecy, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency modestly hints it has overthrown foreign governments, admits that it violates international law and doesn't deny that one of its exploits wrecked a summit conference. The CIA, in short, is making foreign policy and, in so doing, is assuming the roles of the President and the Congress. It has taken on the character of an invisible government answering only to itself. This must stop. The CIA must be made accountable for its activities, not only to the President but also to Congress through a responsible committee.

Recent events in South Vietnam raise questions as to how CIA actions may critically affect U.S. foreign affairs. In early September it was reported that the CIA was giving money—some three million dollars a year in "direct, under-the-table aid"—to the Diem regime's special corps that raided Buddhist pagodas in Saigon. The CIA payments were made even though the U.S. Government publicly deplored the raids, part of the repression of the Buddhists which helped bring about the downfall of the Diem regime.

In Laos, too, the CIA pursued policies that conflicted with official and public policies of the State Department. In 1958 a highly volatile Laos was governed by a loose coalition headed by neutralist Prince Souvanna Phouma. The situation was hardly ideal, but to Ambassador Horace Smith and the U.S. State Department this coalition government seemed to offer the best hope for a stable Laos. According to Smith, the CIA, with the backing of the Pentagon, threw its support behind right-wing leader Gen. Phoumi Nosavan. In August, 1960, Souvanna Phouma was overthrown, and Phoumi Nosavan installed Prince Boun Oum, an ineffectual leader, as titular head of the government. The Communists then sought to take over the country. Gen. Phoumi Nosavan's troops proved unwilling to fight. All of Laos appeared on the verge of going Communist. Frantic diplomatic maneuvers restored a coalition government under neutralist Souvanna Phouma in June, 1962, but in the meantime millions of dollars of U.S. aid had been wasted and vast confusion spread about U.S. aims in Laos.

Ambassador Smith is not the only member of the U.S. diplomatic corps to complain about CIA "spooks" who flit through U.S. embassies while pursuing their own brand of foreign policy. Nor is Laos the only country where the CIA has helped engineer a coup. In 1953 the government of Premier Mohammed Mossadegh of Iran fell because of CIA efforts, says the CIA. Who, if anyone, authorized the agency to overthrow Mossadegh is unknown. Actually, many authorities dispute the CIA's role in the Iranian coup, but since the agency hides behind its cloak of secrecy, its claims cannot be effectively challenged.

The CIA also claims to have masterminded the overthrow of the Communist-influenced government of Jacobo Arbenz Guzman in Guatemala in 1954. In this instance the result undoubtedly benefited the United States, but the question remains as to whether the CIA is the proper tool for such endeavors.

Possibly the mightiest achievement of the CIA was the development of the U-2 reconnaissance aircraft. Surveillance through the U-2 has provided U.S. intelligence with an enormous amount of useful information, and the CIA deserves a great deal of credit for the development of the U-2 as an information tool. But the CIA's usage of the U-2 is something else again. Shortly before a summit conference between President Eisenhower and Premier Khrushchev in 1960, a U-2 was shot down 1,200 miles inside Soviet territory. At first we denied any plane was missing; then an official statement said a weather plane must have strayed off course; and finally we admitted aerial surveillance and justified it as necessary to defend our country. Apparently nobody in the CIA ever fully evaluated the consequences of a U-2 failure over Soviet soil. We had no cover story, and our President arrived at the Paris summit conference with the CIA's egg all over his face.

The U-2 failure over Sverdlovsk involved far more than a daring gamble to obtain intelligence. Because the flight was scheduled on the eve of the Eisenhower-Khrushchev summit meeting, the CIA mission became an uncalculated risk jeopardizing the immediate foreign policy of the United States and trespassing upon the prerogatives of the White House, the State Department and the Congress. The CIA in effect made foreign policy, and we in Congress who are charged with advice and consent for foreign affairs stood by helplessly because we knew nothing of the U-2 activities.

Again, the CIA overplayed its legitimate role in the Bay of Pigs invasion. Those who condemn the CIA for the tactical failures of this fiasco blame the agency for the wrong errors. Its first mistake was to assume the authority to raise an army on U.S. soil, even though the troops were Cuban refugees, without both presidential and congressional approval. The responsibility for organizing and sustaining armed forces lies with Congress, not a supersecret intelligence agency. Second, the CIA was engaged in an invasion which might possibly be construed as an act of war; only Congress has the right to declare war. Because the CIA operates in the way it does, very few of us in Congress had advance knowledge of the invasion plans or were consulted as to the wisdom of such an adventure.

When Congress created the CIA in 1947, it gave the agency no power to make foreign policy. The purpose of the CIA was to centralize the collection and evaluation of intelligence. Less than 20 years later—with 14,000 employees, including specialists in intelligence analysis and espionage, U-2 pilots and assassins—the director of the Central Intelligence Agency is rated one of the half dozen most powerful men in Washington. And as Stewart Alsop reported [CIA, THE BATTLE FOR SECRET POWER, *The Saturday Evening Post*, July 27–Aug. 3, 1963], "The CIA spends a lot more money than the State Department, and at times it has had more real power and influence on high policy."

Defenders of the activities of the CIA say we can no longer afford the luxury of foreign policy conducted according to the rules of the U.S. Constitution. Under the Constitution, Congress has the power to

**One measure of a democracy's strength is the freedom of its citizens to speak out—to dissent from the popular view. Although the editors often disagree with the opinions expressed in this series, we dedicate the series to that freedom.*

Continued

declare war and the responsibility to give advice and consent to the President in making treaties with foreign nations. Congress is also the source of all foreign-policy legislation, including all appropriations for foreign affairs.

The authors of the Constitution, admittedly, lived in a different era. The Cold War, with its highly developed tactics of espionage, counterespionage and subversion, presents problems which go far beyond the imaginings of the men who wrote the Constitution. A new clandestine organization devoted to the gathering and evaluating of intelligence must impinge somewhat upon the functions of some of the traditional agencies.

This information center, however, has no business taking over the roles of the State Department, Defense Department and Congress as well as carrying the nation to the edge of war. In any event, if we must revise the functions of the recognized government agencies, then let us do it through proper legislative channels, not by covert acts of the CIA.

In theory the President, with the help of his cabinet and the National Security Council, controls and directs the CIA. But the President is the nominal head of hundreds of agencies and cannot be kept fully informed at all times of the activities of an agency as large and as powerful as the CIA. Even if the CIA were fully under presidential control, the basic question of the right and duty of Congress to participate in decisions regarding the many Central Intelligence Agency activities would remain unanswered. The issue is not one of executive control or of efficient administration of the CIA. It is the fundamental question of congressional responsibility. Do or do not the elected representatives of the people have the right to know what a critically important agency is doing?

I believe the only means of keeping the CIA, within its proper limits without jeopardizing its need for secrecy is a congressional watchdog committee. Procedures should be established to insure that the judgment and will of Congress are reflected in the major decisions and actions of the CIA. Such controls would also end conflicts between the CIA and other U.S. operations abroad. We who must appropriate funds for the CIA would be provided with enough information to determine whether effective use is made of the money. If the United States should suffer foreign-policy reverses, it would be possible to assess the damage, determine who was to blame and take steps to prevent future mistakes.

A watchdog committee would also stop some of the irresponsible talk concerning U.S. activities abroad. The presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba 18 months after the Bay of Pigs invasion, for example, loosed a torrent of oratory on the magnitude of the Soviet threat in Cuba. If the CIA had briefed a watchdog committee certain inaccurate statements which stemmed from ignorance of the facts would never have been uttered.

Opponents of the watchdog proposal argue that the CIA already reports to subcommittees of the Senate Appropriations and Armed Services committees. At best such reports are superficial. The CIA decides for itself just how much or how little Congress ought to know.

In April, 1956, during the course of a discussion on the Senate floor of the advisability of establishing a joint watchdog committee, Sen. Mike Mansfield raised the question, "How many times does the CIA request a meeting with the particular subcommittees of the Appropriations Committee and the Armed Services Committee?" Sen. Leverett Saltonstall, a member of both committees, replied, ". . . at least twice a year that happens in the Armed Services Committee and at least once a year it happens in the Appropriations Committee. I speak from knowledge during the last year or so. . . ."

After the U-2 episode Sen. Willis Robertson, a member of the Appropriations Committee, said on the floor of the Senate, "I have been hearing testimony presented before the Committee on Appropriations by the Central Intelligence Agency for thirteen years. Never were we told during that time what the money was to be used for. It was a deep, dark secret. I did not know, and today I asked a number of members of our defense subcommittee if they knew that the Central Intelligence Agency owned and operated planes, and they said they did not." We do not permit other government operations, no matter how sensitive, to feed us only the information they think is good for us. The Central Intelligence Agency ought not to be privileged to do so.

How might such a watchdog committee function? In the early years of the Eisenhower Administration, a task force headed by Gen. Mark W. Clark conducted a thorough study of the CIA for the Hoover Commission. The task force recommended that "a small permanent bipartisan commission, composed of members of both houses of Congress and other public-spirited citizens commanding the utmost national respect and confidence, be established by act of Congress to make periodic surveys of the organizations, functions, policies, and results of the government agencies handling foreign-intelligence operations; and to report, under adequate security safeguards. . . . The proposed 'watchdog commission' should be empowered by law to demand and receive any information it needed for its own use."

The Hoover Commission itself differed somewhat from the recommendations of the Clark task force. It recommended the establishment of *two* agencies: a committee charged with reporting to the President periodically and a permanent "watchdog" joint committee of the House and the Senate. Incidentally, among those who at that time supported such control over the CIA was Sen. John F. Kennedy.

Congress has never adopted the watchdog-committee recommendation, largely because some of its members fear that the security of the CIA inevitably would be compromised by such a committee. Such fears are, I believe, unwarranted. The watchdog-committee arrangement has worked well in the case of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, which handles highly sensitive and secret information. That committee has an excellent security record. Its 18 members have proved to be fully as reliable as the hundreds of civil-service personnel, military personnel and presidential appointees who have knowledge in this highly sensitive field.

A small, select joint committee on intelligence would provide the necessary safeguards against abuses of power by the CIA. It would enable Congress to acquire the knowledge needed for an evaluation of our intelligence activities. More than that, it would, in keeping with our constitutional system, insure that Congress is included in the making of decisions vital to the security and well-being of the United States. THE END